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Security Council

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Letter dated 3 August 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Chile for the month of January 2015 (see annex). This document was prepared under my supervision, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Cristián **Barros**
Permanent Representative

15-13265 (E) 190815 240815

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Annex to the letter dated 3 August 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Chile (January 2015)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Chile, in January 2015, the Security Council held 19 public meetings, 1 private meeting and 12 consultations of the whole. The Council adopted three resolutions, agreed on four presidential statements and issued 13 statements to the press. Among the public meetings there were three open debates. On 19 January, the Council held an open debate at ministerial level entitled "Inclusive development for the maintenance of international peace and security", presided over by the President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet. On 30 January, the Council held an open debate on "Protection challenges and needs faced by women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict settings". On 15 January, the Council convened its quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile, Heraldo Muñoz.

The members of the Council also conducted a mission to Haiti during the period from 23 to 25 January.

Africa

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 5 January, under "Other matters", the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Martin Kobler, briefed the Council in closed consultations via videoconferencing on the situation in respect of the demand for an unconditional surrender and disarmament of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR). He indicated that FDLR had failed to fully comply with the deadline of 2 January established by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The Special Representative underscored that FDLR continued to commit war crimes and human rights abuses against the civilian population, including the recruitment of child soldiers, and highlighted the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Agreeing that the process of disarmament of FDLR had been unsatisfactory, the members of the Council coincided on the need to negotiate a presidential statement, which, among other objectives, would seek to send a clear message in support of carrying out joint military operations against FDLR.

On 8 January, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2015/1) in which it stressed that ending the threat of FDLR, including through robust military action by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and

MONUSCO through its Force Intervention Brigade in cooperation with the whole of MONUSCO, pursuant to paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2147 (2014), was a critical and necessary component of civilian protection. The Council also reiterated its readiness to consider targeted sanctions against any individual or entity found to be supporting FDLR, and called on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to approve and implement fully the joint directive of MONUSCO and the armed forces. In the statement, the Council reiterated its support for MONUSCO and called on all parties, including countries that contributed troops to the Force Intervention Brigade, to remain committed to the full and objective implementation of the Mission's mandate, including through military operations undertaken to neutralize FDLR.

On 22 January, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, briefed the Council on the latest report of the Secretary-General on MONUSCO (S/2014/956) and the report of the strategic review of the Mission (S/2014/957), as mandated by Council resolution 2147 (2014). The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Permanent Representative of Jordan, Dina Kawar, also briefed the Council. The Under-Secretary-General stated that during the meetings held on the MONUSCO strategic review process with the Congolese authorities, including the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Joseph Kabila, many relevant issues had been discussed, including the political and security situation in the country and the upcoming elections. During those meetings, he noted, the participants coincided that while much had been achieved in recent years, including the country's reunification, the establishment of the transitional Government and the holding of two national elections, key threats remained, namely, the existence and continued activities of FDLR and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). He underlined that MONUSCO continued to play an important role in neutralizing those groups. Regarding the electoral process and reports that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had closed certain websites, he stressed the importance of freedom of opinion and expression as a democratic value and rejected the use of violence to pursue political objectives. On the proposed reduction of MONUSCO peacekeepers, he underlined that a decrease beyond the recommended 2,000 would impair the ability of the Mission to implement its mandate and could have a negative impact on the protection of civilians, the Mission's core mandated task. Another key consideration, he said, was the neutralization of armed groups, stressing, in that regard, that military operations against FDLR must begin at once. On the withdrawal of MONUSCO from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he underscored the importance of a gradual departure in order to avert setbacks in respect of the progress gained, while emphasizing his readiness to work with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on a progressive transfer of functions and an exit strategy. The Under-Secretary-General concluded by noting that although much had been achieved in the country, in particular the signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region in 2013, much more needed to be done if sustainable peace and security were to be established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

The Permanent Representative of Jordan, in her capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), then briefed the Council on some of the findings and recommendations, since her last

briefing in August 2014, of the Group of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), whose mandate had been extended until 1 February 2015 in Council resolution 2136 (2014), and also touched on the Committee's consideration of the final report of the Group of Experts (S/2015/19) during its meeting on 9 January. Referring to the sanctioned armed group ADF, she stated that military operations had weakened but failed to defeat it, adding that the Group of Experts considered that ADF had the potential to regroup and rebuild since its finance networks had not been significantly affected. Regarding the also-sanctioned FDLR, she underlined that its leadership had not shown a genuine commitment to disarm. The Chair of the Committee reported that ADF, FDLR and other armed groups continued to recruit child soldiers and that no progress had been achieved in preventing gold smuggling, while the illegal exploitation of and trade in wildlife products remained a serious problem. Among the 15 recommendations made by the Group of Experts, the Chair of the Committee highlighted the proposal for an exchange of information between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and others to ensure that gold was being traded according to international due diligence standards, and the suggestion that those Governments investigate persons identified as being involved in supporting ADF networks and take measures to put a stop to that involvement. Regarding the Committee's work for 2015, she expressed her desire to visit the Great Lakes region during the first semester of 2015 and stressed the need to carry out a broad assessment of the effectiveness of the sanctions regime for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ignace Gata Mavita wa Lufuta, expressed his belief that while much had been achieved by his country in partnership with the United Nations, an assessment must be made with a view to keeping the partnership relevant in light of the country's new stage of progress. He emphasized the support needed in capacity-building and development assistance for the enhancement of national ownership and agreed that action had to be taken against FDLR. He concluded by underscoring his Government's commitment to holding peaceful, free and democratic elections.

In the closed consultations that followed, the members of the Council continued their consideration of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO activities with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to the Great Lakes Region, Said Djinnit. Some members of the Council posed questions to the Special Representative and the Special Envoy, after which they agreed on elements to be read out to the press.

On 29 January, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2198 (2015), in which it decided to renew the sanctions regime imposed on the Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1 July 2016 and the mandate of the Group of Experts until 1 August 2016. In that resolution, the Council also demanded that FDLR, ADF, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and all other armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo immediately cease all forms of violence and other destabilizing activities, including the exploitation of natural resources, and that their members immediately and permanently disband, lay down their arms and liberate and demobilize all children from their ranks. Further, in paragraph 15 of resolution 2198 (2015) the Council called on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to pursue its action plan commitments to end sexual violence and violations committed by its armed forces, and in paragraph 20 encouraged the

continuation of efforts by the Government to address issues of illegal exploitation and smuggling of natural resources.

Mali

On 6 January, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on the situation in Mali and the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), based on the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2014/943). He described the security environment in northern Mali as extremely volatile and worrying, presenting challenges to a restoration of human rights, humanitarian access and development programmes in that area of the State. Along the same lines, he underlined that MINUSMA personnel were facing serious threats which included having to deal with attacks almost on a daily basis. Regarding the peace process, he said that while the negotiations under way in Algiers had seen modest progress, they were at a critical point, given the fact that the parties were currently reviewing a draft peace agreement. He urged the parties to demonstrate leadership and the willingness to reach an agreement.

Subsequently, under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Integration and International Cooperation of Mali, Abdoulaye Diop, coincided with the observations made in the Secretary-General's report, stating that the security situation in northern Mali was unstable and a cause for concern, and noting that terrorist attacks had increased in recent months. He recalled his statement of 8 October 2014, in which he had proposed the establishment of an intervention brigade in northern Mali to combat drug traffickers and terrorist groups, given the scale of the ongoing violence. At the same time, he reiterated the commitment of his Government towards reaching a comprehensive peace agreement and resolving the conflict in the north through dialogue and called upon the members of the Council to exert the pressure necessary to ensure that the leaders of the armed movements became personally involved in the peace process in Algiers.

In the closed consultations that followed, the members of the Council discussed several facets of the conflict, inter alia, the need to make progress on an inclusive peace process, and expressed their concern regarding the security situation in the country and the asymmetric attacks on MINUSMA personnel.

On 17 January, the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the coordinated attacks carried out on that day against a MINUSMA camp in Kidal, Mali, which resulted in the death of one Chadian peacekeeper and injury to others.

United Nations Office for West Africa

On 8 January, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), Mohamed Ibn Chambas, briefed the Council on the latest activities of UNOWA and the Secretary-General's report (S/2014/945). He underlined that some tensions in many countries of the region in the lead-up to elections were driven by resistance to incumbent leaders' attempts to hold on to power through constitutional revisions, as was the case in Burkina Faso. The Special Representative expressed his condemnation of the attempt to seize power by force in the Gambia, stating that he

planned to visit Banjul on 14 and 15 January. He noted that in 2015, presidential elections were programmed in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo. Regarding Nigeria and the threat caused by Boko Haram, he underlined that the security situation in the north-east part of the country remained dire despite national and regional efforts. He indicated that more than 300,000 Nigerians had fled to north-western Cameroon and to the south-western part of the Niger. The Special Representative informed the members of the Council that his Office was working with members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to address the regional aspects of the crisis. In his presentation, he also referred to the violence in the Sahel, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and the Ebola crisis. Regarding this last issue, he spoke of his visit in mid-November 2014 together with the President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to the three most-affected countries: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

In the closed consultations that followed, the members of the Council expressed their growing concern over the numerous challenges affecting West Africa, in particular terrorism as closely linked with transnational organized crime. Some members also expressed their concern regarding the potential adverse effects that the upcoming elections in many countries could have on the already fragile situation in the region. They urged the Special Representative to continue working in support of the countries concerned in order that they might carry out peaceful, inclusive and credible elections. On the other hand, there was a call from some members of the Council not to prejudge the situation through the creation of negative scenarios.

With respect to Boko Haram, the members of Council agreed on the need to address the threat caused by that group in a coordinated manner, while taking into account regional and national priorities and efforts with regard to the matter, including the initiatives of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin, and the African Union. Regarding Ebola, the members of the Council expressed their concern regarding the consequences of the outbreak, which had the potential to cause setbacks in the progress achieved in peacebuilding in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 13 January, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Aïchatou Mindaoudou, briefed the Security Council on the latest (thirty-fifth) report of the Secretary-General (S/2014/892). She expressed optimism regarding the overall situation in the country, highlighting important progress in the consolidation of peace and economic recovery, and noting that Côte d'Ivoire was regaining the confidence of the international community. She also underlined the need for vigilance in many areas despite the positive evolution witnessed so far. The fight against impunity was proceeding slowly and there was a need for efforts to ensure that those who had committed human rights violations and acts of sexual violence would be prosecuted. Satisfactory progress was being made in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process but work was still needed. She noted that Côte d'Ivoire still needed continued support in order to build on the gains made so far and complete the important process in which it was engaged. UNOCI would continue to support Côte d'Ivoire in that regard.

The Permanent Representative of Chile, Cristián Barros, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004), briefed the Council on his visit to Côte d'Ivoire (2-7 November 2014), whose main objective had been to assess the state of implementation of the relevant Council resolutions and identify the associated difficulties. He highlighted the fact that the Ivorian authorities had been receptive and that the meetings held during his visit had been productive. He noted weak progress in the area of reintegration in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and the importance of improving coordination with the Group of Experts Committee.

The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, Youssoufou Bamba, expressed his appreciation to the Chair of the Committee for his November visit. He noted that his Government was committed to holding transparent and peaceful elections and stated that dialogue between the authorities and the opposition had resumed. Furthermore, he highlighted his country's economic growth, while noting the commitment of Côte d'Ivoire to align the national diamond sector with the Kimberly Process. In the closed consultations that followed, the members of the Council agreed in general terms that the overall security and political situation had improved in Côte d'Ivoire and expressed optimism for the country's future. However, they also emphasized the importance of remaining attentive to the situation, especially in light of the potentially tense environment that might be created during the upcoming electoral process. Some members of the Council underlined as key remaining challenges the importance of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, accountability for human rights violators, security sector reform, and porous borders.

Libya

On 17 January, the Council issued a statement to the press welcoming the talks held in Geneva on 14 and 15 January and hosted by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and commending the mediation efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Bernardino León. While welcoming the proposal to hold another round of talks, also in Geneva, and the announcement of a ceasefire on 16 January, the press statement reaffirmed that there can be no military solution to the crisis.

On 27 January, the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attack that day perpetrated at the Corinthia Hotel in Tripoli, which resulted in several deaths and injuries.

Central African region

On 20 January, the Council issued a statement to the press welcoming the transfer on that day of Dominic Ongwen from the Central African Republic to the International Criminal Court, calling it a positive step in the direction of achieving international criminal justice and of addressing the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). They recalled that International Criminal Court arrest warrants for other LRA leaders, including Joseph Kony, had yet to be executed, and called upon all States to cooperate with relevant national Governments and the Court so that those warrants could be executed and those charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity could be brought to justice.

Central African Republic

On 20 January, the members of the Council held an informal interactive dialogue on the subject of the final report of the International Commission of Inquiry on the Central African Republic (S/2014/928) with two of the three members of Commission: Fatimata M'Baye and Philip Alston. They highlighted that there were reasonable grounds to believe that during the period investigated, war crimes and crimes against humanity had been committed by all parties to the conflict. At the same time, the threshold requirement for proving the existence of the necessary element of genocidal intent had not been established in relation to any of the actors in the conflict. They further recommended developing and strengthening efforts to fight against impunity in the Central African Republic, including those discussed in the report of the Commission.

On 22 January, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2196 (2015) by which it extended, until 29 January 2016, and strengthened the arms embargo, assets freeze and travel ban imposed on the Central African Republic, and decided to renew until 29 February 2016 the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013). In that resolution, the Council strongly condemned the resurgence of violence in the Central African Republic and urged the country, its neighbouring States and other member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to cooperate in combating regional criminal networks and armed groups involved in the illegal exploitation and smuggling of natural resources.

Burundi

On 21 January, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, and the Permanent Representative of Switzerland, Paul Seger, in his capacity as Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, briefed the Council on the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) which had closed operations on 31 December 2014 in accordance with Council resolution 2137 (2014).

The Under-Secretary-General briefed the Council on the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/36), stating that Burundi had made significant progress since the end of the civil war, including in the creation of a power-sharing system of governance, national reconciliation and security. He attributed those achievements first to the people of Burundi and then to the United Nations and regional and international partners. He emphasized that Burundi still faced formidable challenges with respect, inter alia, to the holding of peaceful and credible elections in 2015, the lifting of restrictions on the right to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, provision of economic and employment opportunities, and access to health care and education. With respect to the upcoming elections, he informed the Council that the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB), mandated to report on the electoral process, had started operations on 1 January. The Under-Secretary-General concluded by thanking the people and Government of Burundi for their cooperation with BNUB and expressed his appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and all of the bilateral donors for their contribution to the United Nations efforts in Burundi.

The Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission stated that despite the drawdown, vigilance was still essential, especially in light of the unstable security situation and the electoral process. He noted that owing to the closing of BNUB, the United Nations country team, led by the resident coordinator, was currently directing the United Nations presence in Burundi. Regarding the Burundi configuration, he saw merit in extending its mandate beyond the electoral period, so as to give continuity to the transition and to concentrate on socioeconomic development after the elections. He underlined, however, that it was the Government of Burundi that would have to make the final decision regarding whether the Peacebuilding Commission should remain in the country.

The Permanent Representative of Burundi, Albert Shingiro, expressed his appreciation for the work of BNUB and stated that his Government was committed to making every effort to hold free, independent and transparent elections. Regarding the security situation, he indicated that peace and security prevailed in Burundi and that the recent reports of violence referred to isolated cases. He also welcomed the designation of Cassam Uteem as Head of MENUB and conveyed the offer of cooperation of the Government of Burundi with respect to the fulfilment of his duties.

In the closed consultations that followed, the members of the Council congratulated BNUB for the progress made in achieving security and political stability. They also called for the holding of independent, impartial and transparent elections.

One delegation proposed the adoption of a presidential statement on the closure of BNUB and suggested the possibility of a visit by the Council to Burundi in March 2015. The members of the Council both welcomed, and expressed their readiness to consider, those proposals.

Middle East

Syrian Arab Republic

On 6 January, the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane, provided a briefing in closed consultations on the chemical weapons elimination programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, in accordance with Council resolution 2118 (2013). She presented the conclusions of the fifteenth monthly report of the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and updated the Council on the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013), including pending matters, in particular the destruction of chemical weapon production facilities and the discrepancies found in the material declared by the Syrian authorities. She referred to the third report of the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons which had been mandated to establish the facts surrounding allegations of the use of toxic chemicals, reportedly chlorine, for hostile purposes in the Syrian Arab Republic, which contained evidence of the use of chlorine barrel bombs in violation of the aforementioned resolution. The report was circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/2014/955), as requested of the presidency by some members of the Council.

In the consultations, the members of the Council referred to the contents of the report and the High Representative's presentation. They also discussed the periodicity of the oral reports provided by the High Representative, which they ultimately decided to maintain on a monthly basis.

On 28 January, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kyung-wha Kang, briefed the Council on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and presented the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/48) regarding the implementation of Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014). She expressed concern regarding the worsening humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, in particular during the current winter season, adding that the extreme violence and destruction wrought by the conflict had resulted in the internal displacement of 7.6 million Syrians and a rise in the number who were in need of assistance. She recalled that 12 million people required humanitarian assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic, while 3.8 million had fled to neighbouring countries. The Assistant Secretary-General stressed that government air strikes and attacks on populated areas by armed opposition groups continued, in contravention of resolution 2139 (2014). Moreover, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continued to commit atrocities in areas under its control, and to engage in the brutal subjugation of women and girls, which included selling them into sexual slavery. She underscored that despite the efforts made, not enough aid had been delivered to the population and that more funding was urgently required so that humanitarian agencies could continue to work, with $2.9 billion required for 2015. She stated that the majority of the requests to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for access to critical areas had remained unanswered.

In the closed consultations that followed, the members of the Council discussed the situation of internally displaced persons and the repercussions of the humanitarian crisis on the region. In this regard, Council members also emphasized the importance of reaching a political solution to the Syrian crisis in order to put an end to the humanitarian emergency. Council members also stressed the importance of supporting neighbouring countries in their efforts to provide safeguards to Syrian refugees. Before finalizing the session, the members of the Council agreed on elements for transmittal to the press that would reflect their priorities and concerns with regard to the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Yemen

On 7 January, the Council issued a statement to the press condemning the bomb attack on the police academy in Sana'a, along with two other attacks that had recently been carried out in that country.

On 20 January, in closed consultations, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, briefed the Council via videoconferencing. He referred to the worsening political and security climate in the country, triggered by a series of unsettling events, namely, the kidnapping of Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak, principal adviser to the President of Yemen, Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, and the attack on the motorcade of the Prime Minister, Khaled Bahah. He stated that clashes had intensified as a result of those recent events, adding that the Houthis had also expanded their control of Sana'a and had overtaken key government buildings, including the presidential palace, on 19 January.

On 20 January, in light of the above-mentioned events, the Council issued a statement to the press that expressed grave concern at the deteriorating crisis and called on all parties to fully implement the ceasefire and resolve their differences through dialogue. The press statement underlined that based on the elections, Mr. Hadi was the legitimate authority and urged all political actors in Yemen to stand with the President in order to re-establish stability and security in the country.

On 26 January, under "Other matters", the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General, in closed consultations, briefed the Council via videoconferencing. He informed the Secretary-General of the discussions he had had with relevant parties which were aimed towards achieving a political solution to the conflict and of the fact that Mr. Hadi's resignation had not been ratified by the parliament of Yemen, since it had not been able to convene owing mainly to the security environment. He added that closed-door negotiations on reaching a political agreement were being held by the interested parties in Yemen.

Lebanon

On 11 January, the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attack perpetrated in Tripoli on 10 January, which had caused numerous deaths and injuries and for which Jahbat Al-Nusra had claimed responsibility. The press statement called on the people of Lebanon people to preserve national unity in the face of attempts to undermine the country's stability, stressing the importance for all parties in that country to respect Lebanon's policy of disassociation and to refrain from any involvement in the Syrian crisis, as consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration.

On 28 January, in closed consultations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, briefed the Council on the escalation of violence across the Blue Line. He announced the creation of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the exchange of fire that had led to the death of a member of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), a peacekeeper from Spain. The members of the Council agreed on elements that were read out to the press condemning the death of that peacekeeper.

Open debate on the situation on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 15 January, the Council held its quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, which was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile.

The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs ad interim, Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, briefed the Council, while warning of deteriorating relations and escalating tensions between Israelis and Palestinians. He underscored that the conflict had entered uncharted territory and urged both sides to take the steps necessary for a negotiated resolution. He called on the international community to uphold its responsibility so that a two-State solution could be achieved. Regarding the situation in the Gaza Strip, he expressed concern for the possibility of a deterioration of the security situation unless certain issues were addressed, namely, the pending payment of salaries to Gaza employees and the slow progress in the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. He underlined the importance of securing the funding necessary to allow the Palestinian population in Gaza to procure

construction materials and, in this regard, emphasized that donors had not fulfilled the pledges made at the conference held in Cairo. He reiterated the call by the United Nations upon the Israeli authorities to freeze and reverse all settlement activities in the occupied territory. On the other hand, he was encouraged by the 25 December 2014 decision of the Supreme Court of Israel, by which it ordered the evacuation and demolition of the largest settlement outpost in the West Bank within a two-year period.

The Assistant Secretary-General ad interim emphasized that the climate in other parts of the region was also tense. He stated that in the Syrian Arab Republic, efforts of the United Nations in support of consultations aimed at the freezing of the fighting in Aleppo continued. In Lebanon, talks among national stakeholders whose goal was to ease the country's sectarian tensions and pave the way towards presidential elections were progressing. He noted that 1.1 million Syrian refugees had been registered in Lebanon.

The Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine and the Permanent Representative of Israel made statements before the Council. Under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, delegations of 27 non-members of the Council made statements during the debate referring to the Middle East peace process, the Syrian crisis and Lebanon. In general terms, they stressed that the status quo in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was not acceptable and urged the Council to uphold its role in respect of achieving a two-State solution. They called on the parties concerned to build trust, strengthen dialogue and avert unilateral acts so as to reactivate the peace process. They also expressed concern for the humanitarian situation affecting the region, in particular in Gaza and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Americas

Mission to Haiti

On 29 January, the Permanent Representative of the United States of America, Samantha Power, and the Permanent Representative of Chile, Cristián Barros, as co-leaders of the mission to Haiti that was conducted from 23 to 25 January, briefed the Council thereon.

The primary purpose of the mission, as set out in its terms of reference (S/2015/40), was to reaffirm the continued support of the Council for the Government and people of Haiti in their efforts to consolidate peace, democracy and stability and promote recovery and sustainable development. The mission also sought to urge Haiti's political actors to work cooperatively and without further delays so as to ensure the urgent holding of free, fair, inclusive and transparent legislative, partial senatorial, municipal and local elections, including those long overdue, in accordance with the constitution of Haiti. The mission wished to assess progress in the ongoing strengthening of the national police as well as in the implementation of relevant Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2180 (2014), taking into account the impact of social and political realities on Haiti's stability and security. Furthermore, the mission wished to express the Council's full support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and to assess the progress made on the ground in the implementation of its relevant mandates.

The Permanent Representative of the United States of America underlined the importance of the visit and the fact that all 15 Council members had participated, which attested to the Council's commitment to the achievement of Haiti's stability and democracy. She stated that the Council's central message to the President of Haiti, Michel Martelly, and the members of the cabinet was that efforts should be redoubled to engage in dialogue and come to an agreement on the holding of free and fair elections as soon as possible. She added that through the visit, Council members were able to witness the resilience of the people of Haiti and their determination to rebuild their country after the earthquake and hold free and fair elections.

The Permanent Representative of Chile stated that the mission demonstrated the Council's commitment to Haiti, as well as Chile's bilateral and multilateral support for the country. He also stated that one of the priorities of the visit was to stress the importance of achieving an inclusive and constructive climate for political stability, democratic governance and development in Haiti, in order to promote conflict prevention. He mentioned that most Council members were concerned about the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Council, in particular resolution 2180 (2014), and the effects on the political and social situation of the elections to be held in 2015, for which MINUSTAH would remain key in maintaining a stable and secure environment. He underscored that the trip had given Council members the opportunity to evaluate initiatives aimed at strengthening the national police and highlighted the Mission's visit to the women's prison at Pétionville, which revealed that progress needed to be made in the area of rule of law and access to justice.

Europe

Killing of bus passengers in the Donetsk region, Ukraine

On 13 January, the Council issued a statement to the press in which its members condemned in the strongest terms the killing of 11 civilians and the injuring of 17, among them women and children, as a result of the shelling of a passenger bus on that day in the Donetsk region of Ukraine. They underlined the need for an objective investigation to be conducted and for the perpetrators of the act to be brought to justice, and the need for strict observance of the Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014 and its implementing Memorandum of 19 September 2014.

Killing of civilians in Donetsk, Ukraine

On 22 January, the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the attack on a public transport stop in the city of Donetsk on that day, which had resulted in the death of as many as 15 civilians and injury to more than 20, among them women and children. They underlined the need to conduct an objective investigation and bring the perpetrators of this reprehensible act to justice. They further underlined the need for full implementation of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum and welcomed the joint statement of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of France, Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine issued in Berlin on 21 January 2015.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

On 21 January, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the latest developments in Ukraine. He expressed his concern over the fact that the escalation of violence was the worst that had occurred in eastern Ukraine since the agreement of the ceasefire and the Minsk Protocol. He noted that the heavy fighting around Donetsk airport had spread throughout the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk and to other cities that had previously been relatively calm, resulting in an increase in the numbers of dead and injured among civilians. As a sign of escalation, he referred to reported reinforcement of fighters on both sides, with the deployment of more sophisticated and heavier weaponry. He reported that during his visit to Ukraine in December 2014, he had seen evidence that the increased levels of violence threatened to unravel the Minsk agreements and stressed that there could not be any unilateral attempts either to change the provisions of the Minsk agreements or to interpret them selectively. The Under-Secretary-General underlined that as a result of the escalation of the conflict, the humanitarian situation had further deteriorated, with a significant increase in the number of internally displaced persons and refugees He called on both parties to the conflict to allow humanitarian access, to maintain the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum as a basis for political dialogue, and to persist in their diplomatic efforts.

The members of the Council made statements. Many expressed support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and concern at the escalation of violence and the resulting humanitarian situation. They underlined the importance of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum and called on the parties to cease hostilities at once. Subsequently, the representative of Ukraine made a statement in conformity with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

On 26 January, the Under-Secretary-General briefed the Council on the latest developments in Ukraine, particularly the rocket attacks on the city of Mariupol, which had caused dozens of civilian deaths. He noted that in the five days that had elapsed since his last briefing, on 21 January, close to 50 civilians had been killed and 150 seriously injured as a result of the violence. He urged a revival of the commitment to the Minsk accords, in addition to underlining the need for full political commitment at the highest levels to finding a lasting political solution. He called on the rebels to immediately cease their provocative and violent actions, to abide by international law and to make good on their commitments. He noted that Ukraine's leadership had been vocal about its commitment to the Minsk accords and asserted that it remained in a defensive position. He also noted the recent emergency measures adopted by the National Security and Defence Council, particularly those related to "strengthening counter-terrorism measures", and appealed to the Government of Ukraine to apply maximum restraint. Regarding the attacks on Mariupol, the Under-Secretary-General stated that the special monitoring mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe OSCE had reported that the rockets had been launched from the territory controlled by the so-called Donetsk people's republic and had deliberately targeted civilian communities in violation of international humanitarian law. He stressed that the perpetrators must be held accountable and brought to justice. Citing bureaucratic obstacles to humanitarian access imposed by both sides to the conflict, he stressed the importance of

guaranteeing humanitarian workers, together with goods, full and unhindered access to those in need.

The members of the Council condemned the attack on Mariupol as a violation of international humanitarian law, which had resulted in civilian casualties, and called for those responsible to be brought to justice. Some members called for an objective investigation of the tragedy. The representative of Ukraine made a statement, in accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

Cyprus

On 26 January, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), Lisa Buttenheim, and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus, Espen Barthe Eide, briefed the Council in closed consultations. The Special Representative presented the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2015/17), indicating that the situation along the green line had remained relatively stable. Several members of the Council urged the parties to reactivate negotiations towards reaching a settlement. Previously, on 21 January, the Council had held a private meeting with the UNFICYP troop-contributing countries.

On 29 January, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2197 (2015), in which it decided to extend the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period ending on 31 July 2015. In that resolution, the Council, while recognizing the progress made so far in the negotiations, noted that that had not been sufficient and called for their urgent resumption. The Council also called for leaders of both communities to increase the participation of civil society in the process and to improve the public atmosphere for the negotiations; and called on the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkish forces to restore in Strovilia the military status quo that had existed prior to 30 June 2000.

Asia

United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

On 21 January, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), Miroslav Jenča, briefed the Council in closed consultations on the developments in the region of Central Asia and the work of UNRCCA. The Special Representative highlighted the Regional Centre's efforts in promoting regional cooperation in combating drug trafficking and extremism, and tackling the shared management of the region's water resources. He also stressed the Centre's collaboration with regional organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), OSCE, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the European Union.

The members of the Council expressed their support for the work of the Special Representative and praised the cross-cutting approach applied by UNRCCA in its efforts to resolve the problems affecting the countries of Central Asia, including transnational crime. Some members of the Council encouraged the Centre

to support Central Asian countries in promoting democratization, rule of law, and good governance and in implementing their human rights commitments and expressed concern regarding the effect that the security situation in Afghanistan was having on Central Asia, especially in view of the withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan and the concentration of fighters in the northern part of that country. Some Member States also stressed that UNRCCA should increase its contribution to the efforts to counter the flow of drugs from Afghanistan to Central Asian countries, in cooperation with UNODC, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

On 23 January, the Council issued a statement to the press in which it welcomed the briefing given by the Special Representative and acknowledged the work of UNRCCA in the areas of conflict prevention, regional counter-terrorism activities and engagement between the Central Asian States and Afghanistan.

Nepal

On 28 January, under "Other matters" and at the request of the Secretariat, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs ad interim, briefed the members of the Council on the situation in Nepal. He informed the Council of the political stalemate and national strike caused by a rift between parties after the congress failed to adopt a new constitution by the 22 January deadline, which had paralysed the country.

The members of the Council expressed their support for the democratic process in Nepal.

Thematic and general issues

Charlie Hebdo attack

On 7 January, the Council issued a statement to the press strongly condemning the terrorist attack that had occurred on that day at the offices of the French newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, which had caused numerous deaths, of journalists, media professionals and associated personnel, and two policemen. The members of the Council strongly condemned that not-to-be-tolerated terrorist act which had targeted journalists and the newspaper.

Briefing on post-conflict peacebuilding

On 14 January, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Jan Eliasson, and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Brazil, Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, briefed the Council on the subject of post-conflict peacebuilding. The briefing was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile.

The Deputy Secretary-General introduced the Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict (S/2014/694) and highlighted five priority considerations identified in the report. First, peacebuilding is most effective when political, security and development actors support a common and comprehensive strategy. Second, it is important that newly formed institutions in post-conflict countries be built on political agreements and that political divisions be averted. Third, peacebuilding requires sustained international political, technical and

financial support. Fourth, regional actors and neighbouring countries can play a critical role in creating an environment conducive to sustainable peace. Fifth, as the Deputy Secretary-General reminded the Council, promoting inclusion and women's equal participation in post-conflict and development processes must be ensured. He also referred to the important review of the United Nation peacebuilding architecture, highlighting that the Peacebuilding Commission had itself evolved since its creation in 2005 and pointing out a view shared by many, namely, that the Commission needed to improve and adapt its structure and working methods to a rapidly changing environment. He underlined that the review of the peacebuilding architecture would coincide with the Secretary-General's review of peace operations and the global study encompassing an assessment of progress in implementing Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. When looking at a conflict, he concluded, the focus must be placed on the pre- and post-conflict stages, and less on the conflict itself.

The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission expressed his satisfaction with the endorsement by the Council and the General Assembly of the terms of reference of the review of the peacebuilding architecture. He underlined that the exercise represented an opportunity to identify gaps and areas of progress since the Commission's creation. In his opinion, the results of the review should allow the Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund to reach their full potential. He highlighted the importance of seeking greater coherence and complementarity between the political and the operational response of the United Nations to post-conflict situations, in order to improve the Commission's working relationship with the Council. He also stressed the important role of regional and subregional organizations in peacebuilding, as well as the participation of women in building and sustaining peace.

The President of the Council subsequently read out the presidential statement (S/PRST/2015/2) adopted by the Council on that day. In the statement, the Council recognized peacebuilding as an important element of United Nations efforts in countries emerging from conflict and emphasized that for peacebuilding to succeed, the primary responsibility lay with national Governments and other national stakeholders, including civil society. It underlined the importance of inclusivity in advancing relevant processes in order to ensure that the needs of all segments of society were being considered, as well as the role of women and the principle of national ownership in peacebuilding activities. In the statement, the Council reaffirmed that sustainable peace and security required an integrated sustainable approach based on coherence among political, security and development approaches, which were essential for improving the respect for human rights, advancing gender equality, strengthening the rule of law and advancing economic development in countries emerging from conflict.

The members of the Council expressed the view that, while some success had been achieved in the 10 years that had elapsed since the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, weaknesses still existed and must be addressed in order to improve the Commission's effectiveness and prevent countries from relapsing into conflict. Some examples cited by Council members in that regard included lack of sufficient funding and inadequate coordination among missions in the field. Some members of the Council welcomed the 2015 review process of the Commission, while others looked forward to its outcome and the consideration of its recommendations. Some members of the Council reaffirmed their continued support

for the Commission, considering it an essential actor in the context of helping countries resolve conflict and move towards sustainable peace. They also underlined the key role of women in peacebuilding processes, while emphasizing that the review of the peacebuilding architecture and that of peacekeeping operations should be mutually reinforcing. Different views were expressed on how the Commission should function in its advisory role.

Open debate on inclusive development

On 19 January, the Council held a ministerial open debate on "Inclusive development for the maintenance of international peace and security", presided over by the President of Chile. The Secretary-General, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the President of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa and 2011 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Leymah Gbowee, briefed the Council on that occasion. In total, 76 delegations took the floor, including 54 non-Council member States and the delegation of the European Union, in accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. A concept note on the theme of the debate (S/2015/6) had been distributed previously.

In his statement, the Secretary-General welcomed the opportunity to focus on inclusive development, highlighting the importance of building peaceful and inclusive societies. He recalled that high levels of inequality could be socially, politically and environmentally damaging, underlining in that regard that unequal development can contribute to crime and a sense of hopelessness and breed extremism. He also advised Governments, the private sector and civil society to show their commitment to education, health and job creation as a basis for working towards inclusive development. The Secretary-General reminded the members of the Council of the interdependence of the three founding pillars of the Organization: peace and security, development and human rights; and urged Member States to work in all three areas simultaneously.

The Secretary-General declared the readiness of the United Nations system to increase support for countries in promoting inclusive development. He offered a reminder that 2015 was the year for action on sustainable development and referred to the efforts being made to launch a post-2015 sustainable development agenda and reach an agreement on climate change. He highlighted that the negotiations in that regard presented an important opportunity to reinforce the interdependence of the three pillars and urged the members of the Council to contribute to ensuring that that message was heard throughout the process.

The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission underlined that inclusive development was intrinsically linked to the Commission's mandate, as political exclusion was often an important determinant of the relapse into conflict. He added that the mutually reinforcing nature of development, peace and security and human rights was central to the rationale behind the creation of the Commission. He stated, however, that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission were in a better position to analyse those issues in coordination with United Nations development organizations. He cited Burundi, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone as examples of countries where the Commission had contributed to more inclusive societies by working with Governments to promote trust and an inclusive political process. He also affirmed the importance of

reinforcing national ownership in that regard and rebuilding the fabric of fractured societies in countries torn by conflict.

Ms. Gbowee then briefed the Council, citing the experience of a women's group in Liberia which had striven for peace in that country after 14 years of civil war. She added that although peace had been achieved in Liberia, fear prevailed around the globe, owing to the existence of threats to freedom of worship and expression, as well as to girls' access to education, among other rights. She underlined the need for Council reform, stating that as the world had changed since 1945, the reform of some current international systems and structures was therefore due.

The President of Chile, speaking in her national capacity, highlighted the need to address the underlying causes of today's threats, such as terrorism and the arms trade, in order to contribute effectively to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. She stated that Chile had been working to reduce social gaps and prevent segments of the population from being excluded, although there was still much work to be done in that arena. She cited the positive example of Liberia, where the implementation of mechanisms designed to promote the inclusion of all sectors of society had contributed to the achievement of national reconciliation and peacebuilding.

During the debate, the members of the Council shared their views on the role of inclusive development in preventing conflict and in post-conflict situations. Some reaffirmed the linkage between inclusive development and peace and security, emphasizing the importance of combating inequality and engaging all sectors of society, and women in particular, in political processes,. Others, while acknowledging the need to address inclusion and the root causes of conflict and inequality, questioned the role of the Council as the appropriate forum within which to discuss those matters.

Subsequently, the Council adopted a presidential statement on inclusive development for the maintenance of international peace and security (S/PRST/2015/3), which underlined that security and development were closely interlinked, mutually reinforcing and key to attaining sustainable peace. In that statement, the Council affirmed that national ownership was key to establishing sustainable peace, and that in that regard there was a need for an integrated approach which promoted coherence among political, security, development, human rights and rule of law activities, and addressed the root causes of conflict; and encouraged Member States to consider developing a United Nations common approach to inclusive development as a key to preventing conflict and enabling long-term stability and sustainable peace.

Boko Haram

On 19 January, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2015/4) on the terrorist group Boko Haram, in which it strongly condemned the recent escalation in attacks and expressed its concern at the scale of the increasing humanitarian crisis and displacement caused by the group's activities in the region. The Council took note of the decision of the member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin to operationalize the Multinational Joint Task Force to enable it to carry out military operations against Boko Haram.

Murder of Haruna Yukawa

On 25 January, the Council issued a statement to the press deploring the apparent murder of Japanese citizen Haruna Yukawa by ISIL. The press statement strongly condemned that heinous and cowardly act and demanded the immediate release of Japanese citizen Kenji Goto.

Wrap-up session: implementation of the note by the President of the Council (S/2010/507)

On 29 January, the Council held a wrap-up session. The President of the Council and Permanent Representative of Chile, in his national capacity, referred to the meetings and events that had been held during January.

The members of the Council made statements to express their appreciation for the work of the delegation of Chile during its presidency, including the Council's visit to Haiti.

Sinai terrorist attack

On 30 January, the Council issued a statement to the press \ condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks perpetrated on 29 January on the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, which had killed and injured dozens of Egyptian soldiers and civilians.

Open debate on protection of civilians in armed conflict: protection challenges and needs faced by women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict settings

On 30 January, the Council held an open debate on the theme "Protection of civilians in armed conflict: protection challenges and needs faced by women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict settings". The Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator; the Director for International Law and Policy at the International Committee of the Red Cross, Helen Durham; and a representative of the Non-Governmental Organization Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, Ilwad Elman, briefed the Council on that occasion. A concept note (S/2015/32) had been distributed previously.

The Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs stated that the Council had taken important steps towards placing the protection of civilians at the centre of its mandate, noting at the same time that those in need of protection had increased dramatically in 2014, from 52 million to 76 million. She underlined that the brutalization of women remained a constant feature of conflict, as seen in Iraq and Nigeria. In conflict situations, she added, women and girls were often the first to lose their rights to education and to political participation among other rights. The Assistant Secretary-General also affirmed that parties to conflict must be pressured to do more to comply with their legal obligations and ensure accountability for violations, while stressing that the Council and the international community must also take measures in that regard. She highlighted the importance of achieving political solutions to conflicts at an early stage, and of identifying specific threats faced by civilians in the initial phases of conflict.

The Director for International Law and Policy at the International Committee of the Red Cross underlined that no progress had been made with respect to how armed conflicts were being fought, with civilians frequently targeted by combatants.

She highlighted that sexual violence remained invisible, with many victims feeling shamed and opting to stay silent for fear of retaliation. She underscored that sexual violence was a medical emergency and that victims needed to receive immediate assistance under conditions of the strictest confidentiality, while at the same time stressing that sexual violence was not inevitable and could — and must — be stopped.

The representative of the Non-Governmental Organization Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, in her capacity as Director of the Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre in Somalia, informed the Council that her work involved providing emergency life-saving services for survivors of gender-based violence. She underlined that civilian protection strategies had failed to meaningfully include women, adding that women felt that those measures did not take their vulnerabilities into account. In that regard, she stated that in order for protection concerns to be addressed, more responsive channels for communication with humanitarian workers and peacekeepers were needed. She urged the Council to ensure that missions with protection-of-civilians mandates had adequate logistic support and to address the protection needs of humanitarian workers and human rights defenders. She recommended that the Council increase the number of women staff in peacekeeping operations and urged it to insist on armed groups' being held accountable for sexual and gender based-violence and on troop-contributing countries' being held responsible for crimes committed by their troops.

After the statements made by the members of the Council, 48 other delegations took the floor. The delegation of the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See and the delegation of the European Union, the latter in accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, also took the floor.